

Safeguarding policy and procedure

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Context and introduction

The Academy is committed to creating a safe and welcoming environment where everyone is respected and valued. This policy is part of a collection of policies that the Academy has to prevent harm, harassment, bullying or abuse and to manage it appropriately when it occurs.

It outlines the processes that the Academy uses to safeguard children, at-risk adults and young people in our work and the work of organisations we fund. It details how we will respond if a safeguarding issue arises, including reporting it to agencies or authorities where appropriate.

This safeguarding policy is supported by the following Academy policies and procedures:

- [Bullying and harassment policy](#)
- Whistleblowing policy
- [Disciplinary policy](#) (including [Fellows Conduct Committee](#))
- [Code of conduct](#) for Fellows working on Academy of Medical Sciences Business
- Staff policies (including recruitment, staff disciplinary and grievance policies)
- [Safer space policy](#)
- Contractual requirements with partners and recipients of grant funding.

The Council members, as charity trustees, are ultimately responsible for the development and implementation of this policy.

Who does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to Academy employees and interns (staff), Fellows, representatives, partners, volunteers and contractors as well as those we fund (Grant Holders) or involve in our activities (Participants), who interact with children or at-risk adults and young people. It outlines the actions the Academy will take to protect those children or young people and at-risk adults from abuse or harm.

The Academy supports a culture of raising concerns and considers this a routine part of our business. Should anyone to whom this policy applies feel that they are unable for any reason to raise concerns in the manner outlined in the policy, they should feel able to talk to any senior member of Academy staff (Manager, Senior Manager, Head, Director or Executive Director)– and they in turn will escalate as appropriate.

Compliance with the policy is mandatory for all to whom it applies. Where appropriate, failure to comply will lead to disciplinary action being taken.

This policy *does not* apply to clients using rooms in the conference venue at 41 Portland Place (the Academy's headquarters building) for physical or hybrid events organised by third parties, or to attendees at these events. Those attending third party events should contact the event organiser for their safeguarding information.

Safeguarding scope and definitions

Grant holder

A grant holder is an awardee or a named person on a grant awarded by the Academy.

Participant

Anyone participating in Academy programmes, activities or events; job and grant applicants; contractors or anyone working for, or on behalf of, the Academy.

This policy focusses on the safeguarding of children and at-risk adults and young people. Below we define children and at-risk adults and young people, what safeguarding is and the types of abuse and harm that should be guarded against. Everyone who works with children and/or at-risk adults and young people, or comes into regular contact with them, has a responsibility for keeping them safe.

Volunteer

A person who freely offers to take part in the work of the Academy, by providing their time, expertise or experience without payment.

Children

A child is anyone under the age of 18.

Safeguarding a child means:

- Protecting them from abuse, maltreatment and exploitation.
- Preventing anything from harming their mental or physical health or development.
- Ensuring they can grow up with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to ensure they have the best outcomes in life.

(Taken from the Charity Commission's guidance Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees)

At-risk adults

Any adult may experience abuse or harm, it is therefore vital to be open to the possibility that any adult may be at-risk and/or vulnerable and that this can be temporary or on-going depending on the support and protective factors around them. However, certain people are at greater risk so are given more protection by law.

A 'vulnerable adult' is anyone aged 18 or over who:

- Has needs for care and or support.
- As a result of care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from abuse or neglect.
- Is currently experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect.

From time to time Academy work involves young people from the 18-to-25 age bracket. It is accepted that individuals of these ages are particularly likely to fall within the "at-risk" category. We see this as a transitional period in which people legally transition between child and adult, therefore our work needs to address their specific needs. In this policy, we define vulnerable people within this age bracket as 'vulnerable young people'.

This transition presents a particular set of challenges to those who are already at risk of abuse; therefore, certain groups of young people may need extra support. This includes young parents and carers who may be struggling with their caring responsibilities.

At-risk adults and young people may:

- Have a mental or physical illness.
- Have a physical, sensory or learning disability.
- Have addiction problems.
- Have problems with substance abuse or a history of drug or alcohol misuse.
- Have a history of experiencing abuse, which may be ongoing.
- Have asylum-seeking or refugee status.
- Be undergoing gender reassignment.
- Be homeless or live in temporary accommodation.
- Be 'looked after', in care (e.g., in a residential home, school or secure unit) or a care leaver.
- Be in the first two years of transitioning from being 'looked after', in care (e.g., in a residential home, school or secure unit) to living independently in rented and/or hostel accommodation.
- Be at risk of, or have experienced, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), radicalisation, sexual or financial exploitation, forced marriage, modern slavery or trafficking.
- Be a young or an ex-offender.
- Be from any other marginalised population that experiences discrimination and/or exclusion (social, political and economic) because of unequal power relationships across economic, political, social and cultural dimensions.

Whether an individual is at risk or not is something that changes with their circumstances – the above list is not exhaustive, and each case(s) brought under this policy will be examined accordingly.

Safeguarding at-risk adults and young people means:

- Ensuring they can live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.
- Empowering them by encouraging them to make their own decisions and provide informed consent.
- Taking all reasonable steps to prevent the risk of abuse or neglect and stop it from occurring.

Types of abuse and harm

Abuse and harm can take many forms, and each case of potential abuse should be considered on its own terms. Examples of abuse inflicted on children or at-risk adults are:

- Physical abuse.
- Domestic violence or abuse.
- Sexual abuse, including sexual exploitation and sexual harassment.
- Psychological or emotional abuse.
- Financial or material abuse.
- Modern slavery.
- Discriminatory abuse.
- Organisational or institutional abuse.

- Neglect or acts of omission.
- Self-neglect.

This list is not exhaustive.

It is important to remember that it is not an individual's responsibility to determine whether abuse is occurring, or to identify which category of abuse this may be – this is the job of the professionals to whom you should pass your concerns.

When considering safeguarding issues in respect of at-risk adults and young people, their right to safety must be carefully balanced with their rights to liberty and autonomy, and their right to a family life. A particular emphasis is therefore given to supporting the person at risk to make decisions for themselves wherever possible, to avoid causing a different kind of harm by removing a person's freedom of choice.

Procedures for managing safeguarding

The Academy commits to take the following actions to promote safeguarding:

1. Identify a named member of staff (and deputy) as the Academy's Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Lead respectively, and an Honorary Officer with responsibility for updating the Academy Council on matters relating to safeguarding. See below for these individuals' details.
2. Ensure all staff working with children or at-risk adults and young people are provided with relevant training about safeguarding and understand their roles and responsibilities.
3. Adopt safer recruitment practices for staff, requiring applicants to:
 - a. Complete an application form which includes their employment history and explains any gaps in that history.
 - b. Be interviewed, if shortlisted.
 - c. Provide details of two references.
 - d. Provide evidence of identity and provide evidence of their right to work in the UK.
4. Require any applicant who may work with children or at-risk adults (for example in connection with events, engagement programmes or programme development) to be checked in accordance with the Government Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) regulations, as appropriate to their role. DBS checks will be repeated in respect of continuing members of staff who work with children or at-risk adults every three years, in line with recommended good practice.
5. Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures including risk assessments are in operation both within the Academy and with any organisations contracted to undertake work on behalf of the Academy, to prevent the employment/ deployment of unsuitable individuals.
6. Ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and that support is provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concerns (see "**Reporting Procedure**" below)

7. Ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained, securely stored, and retained for two years after the incident or the conclusion of any resulting investigation.
8. Use safeguarding procedures when involving children and at-risk adults and young people appropriately and share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know when raised (see "**Reporting Procedure**" below).
9. Ensure that staff who are in regular contact with children and/or at-risk adults or young people adopt relevant child protection and safeguarding good practice.
10. Ensure that the Academy provides a safe physical, virtual and hybrid environment for all individuals by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.

Persons responsible for safeguarding at the Academy

Good safeguarding practice requires individuals identified with responsibility for safeguarding both on the staff and on the organisations Governance boards or committees. At the Academy, they are as follows:

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Acting Chief Executive, Academy of Medical Sciences (currently Jill Lockett) – provides strategic advice and oversight

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Director of communications and Engagement, Academy of Medical Sciences (currently Nick Hillier) – provides strategic advice and operational leadership

Honorary Officer responsible for safeguarding: Vice President (clinical), Academy of Medical Sciences (currently Professor Ros Smyth FMedSci) – provides strategic advice and oversight

In the case of neither the Designated or Deputy Safeguarding Lead being available, responsibility will lie with the Academy President. The persons responsible are connected to the roles listed above, the individuals will be updated as and when posts are replaced.

Assessing risks in Academy activities

Activities undertaken by the Academy with children and/or at-risk adults or young people should be appropriate to the participants, be properly managed and supervised, and should have an associated risk assessment.

- The risk assessment should not be generic, but created specifically for the activity and the location in which it is held.
- The Academy's standard risk assessment template should be used.
- Risk assessments should include mitigation measures and due consideration should be made as to the acceptable level of risk following mitigation.
- Risk assessments should explicitly declare any safeguarding risks identified, in addition to usual health and safety considerations.
- Risk assessments should take into consideration the different factors for physical, virtual and hybrid events or activities.
- Additional safeguarding risks that should be considered include:

- Ensuring children or at-risk adults and young people are not left alone or unsupervised or allowing for them to be automatically assigned to a virtual meeting room or breakout group without supervision.
- Whether staff or volunteers have had appropriate checks, such as DBS checks as part of their recruitment, selection or invitation (see above in relation to safer recruitment practices).
- Encouraging or allowing children or at-risk adults and young people to behave in ways that are inappropriate, that may intimidate other children or adults or put them at physical, sexual or emotional risk.
- Opportunities for children or at-risk adults and young people to have access to inappropriate print, analogue or digital materials as well as virtual or social networks.
- Opportunities for children or at-risk adults and young people to make digital or virtual connections that last beyond the event or supervised activity e.g., connecting on social media.

Photography and filming

Having a digital record of events and activities such as photographs, films or recordings of virtual and hybrid meetings on Teams or Zoom can be useful for report writing, publication, communication or marketing purposes. Any personal data in regard to photography and filming is collected, stored and used as outlined in the Academy's [Privacy Policies](#). If an Academy event or activity involves photography or filming and children and/or at-risk adults and young people are present, additional permissions for the photography or filming will need to be obtained.

Written permission must be obtained from the adult responsible for a child under 16 (parent, carer or teacher). At-risk adults and children over the age of 16 are assumed to be able to give their own consent, however relevant staff should take into account capacity to give consent where appropriate. Permission may be given through written consent, verbal or automated consent to virtual meeting recording, via written or verbal notices given at and before an event, or entering designated filming and photography spaces in venues.

Where written consent is obtained, the individual(s) will be informed of the purpose of the photography/filming and where the photos/videos will be published. Photos/videos on Academy media platforms can be taken down by request at any point if they pose a safeguarding risk. In addition to safeguarding risks, should any digital content result in cyberbullying, malicious comments, harassment or personal attacks on an individual, the Academy will remove images where it has the ability to do so. Staff will also provide support to any individuals affected by online abuse or harassment connected to working with the Academy.

Photographs or films not intended to identify an individual person should minimise the risk of personal identification of a child or vulnerable adult. However, to maintain anonymity name badges and other identifying elements, such as school badges or organisational logos, should not be captured.

Images must be stored and used in accordance with the Academy's [Privacy Policy](#) along with any associated consent forms.

Reporting procedure

Staff, Fellows and other individuals working with children and/or at-risk adults and young people on behalf of the Academy, who have any welfare concerns and/or identify indicators of possible abuse or neglect should notify the most senior member of Academy staff present (Manager, Senior Manager, Head, Director or Executive Director) and they should, in turn, notify the Academy's Designated Safeguarding Lead or their Deputy. If no senior member of Academy staff is present at the time safeguarding concerns are identified, then the reporting individual should notify the Academy's Designated Safeguarding Lead or their Deputy as soon as possible.

Doing so quickly will enable those concerns to be referred to the appropriate organisation - in the UK this will usually be the Local Authority's adult or children's social care service.

When a safeguarding issue is observed by or raised with an Academy staff member or other individual, the following actions should be taken:

1. Remove the threat or person involved.
2. The Designated Safeguarding Lead or their Deputy should be contacted immediately, and a safeguarding [incident reporting form](#) completed.
3. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will review the safeguarding incident reporting form and seek confidential advice from (a) the Executive Director, and (b) the Honorary Officer for safeguarding.
4. If the safeguarding issue relates to an allegation of sexual abuse (including sexual exploitation or sexual harassment) made against (a) the Academy or individuals working on its behalf, or (b) a Grant Holder/their Host Institution, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider whether a report should be made to the Academy's grant funders.
5. Following a confidential discussion, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide to do one of the following:

If action is required:

- Refer the concern to relevant local safeguarding agency, police or social services for investigation and in the event that the issue relates to a child, their parent or guardian. After which:
 - Designated Safeguarding Lead records the action taken.
 - Participate in local safeguarding agency/social services investigation as required.
 - Designated Safeguarding Lead maintains contact with relevant local safeguarding agency, police or social services and parent/guardian when appropriate.
 - Outcome recorded on the safeguarding incident reporting form and securely stored in line with the Academy's Privacy policy. If no outcome is received or publicly reported this should be noted on the reporting form.

If no further action is required.

- Designated Safeguarding Lead completes the safeguarding incident reporting form, which is then securely stored in line with the Academy's [Privacy Policy](#).

Reports of incidents or concerns and any consequential actions will also be passed to the Academy's Senior Leadership Team (Directors), and the Honorary Officer responsible for Safeguarding will provide a report at the next Academy Council meeting or via Council-wide email.

It is the responsibility of the Academy Council to review the action that was taken and decide on whether this was correct, suggest any remedial action or updates to the policy, and that the Academy cooperates as necessary with the relevant authorities.

Confidentiality

All matters relating to child protection and safeguarding are confidential, however:

- In the event of any reports of incidents or concerns and any consequential actions will be shared with the appropriate individuals highlighted in this policy.
- Staff, Fellows or other individuals undertaking work for the Academy should only receive or circulate personal information about children and/or at-risk adults or young people on a need-to-know basis.
- Staff, Fellows or other individuals undertaking work for the Academy must not promise to keep secrets, which might compromise the safety or well-being of the children or at-risk adults and young people concerned.

Allegations against Academy representatives

Staff, Fellows and other individuals working with children or at-risk adults and young people on behalf of the Academy should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with them. It is always advisable that work with children or at-risk adults and young people, whether one to one or in a group is conducted in a public rather than a private space (see [Safer space policy](#) and [Code of conduct](#) for Fellows working on Academy of Medical Sciences Business).

Children or at-risk adults and young people may make an allegation against a representative working for the Academy. If such an allegation is made to the Academy, the member of staff to whom the allegation is communicated must immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will follow the Reporting Procedure set out above.

Consideration should be given to supporting all parties involved in any incidents and allegations, and the lessons to be learnt from such incidents.

Safeguarding in international contexts

The Academy funds and delivers its activities globally and safeguarding risks may be different in a nation with significantly different legal and cultural practices. These differences should be taken into consideration during any risk assessments. Staff working on activities delivered outside the UK may require specialist training if they will be working with children or at-risk adults overseas.

Safeguarding issues arising during research activities funded by the Academy

As a funder of research, the Academy expects that Host Institutions (the employing higher education institutions) will have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place and that safeguarding is assessed and mitigated as part of any funded activity.

Some kinds of research may raise safeguarding issues for either researchers, participants, or both, due to the nature of the participants or the relationships formed during the research. Those applying for research funding will be required to show that they have thought about and addressed safeguarding issues in delivering their research, where it involves children and/or at-risk adults and/or young people, or relationships with power differentials.

As part of the Academy's award conditions, we expect that Grant Holders and their Host Institutions will:

- Take reasonable steps to prevent actual, attempted or threatened abuse, harm or harassment by its employees.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that individuals are enabled to report concerns and complaints of actual, attempted or threatened exploitation, abuse, harm or harassment.
- Adopt and follow robust procedures for the reporting and investigation of actual, attempted or threatened abuse, harm or harassment by employees, including reporting such matters to the relevant authorities.
- Report any safeguarding concerns to the Academy so that the Academy can fulfil its obligations to grant funders.

Confirmed offences will be sufficient grounds to terminate relevant activities funded by the Award or where appropriate, the entirety of the Award, and failure to suitably investigate alleged offences may lead to an institution's eligibility to receive Academy funding or to take part in Academy activities, being suspended.

Monitoring and updating this policy

The policy will be reviewed by the Council on the first anniversary of implementation and then every three years, or in the following circumstances:

- Changes in legislation and/or government guidance.
- As required by the Charity Commission

- As a result of any other meaningful change or event, including a safeguarding incident.

This policy review will be conducted by staff in the first instance who will draw in advice from internal leads the Academy Lawyers, Safeguarding contacts at similar organisations and others as necessary. Any changes will be subject to review by the senior leadership team and other Academy Governance committees as appropriate.

Further resources

Recognising the signs of abuse

Children <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1188/definitions-signs-child-abuse.pdf>

Adults <https://www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/types-of-harm/>

Managing allegations of abuse

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/managing-allegations-of-abuse/>